



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Teton
National Park

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Grand Teton National Park News Release

REMINDER OF SPRING BEAR ACTIVITY IN GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK

Superintendent Steve Martin reminds local residents and visitors to be alert for signs of bear activity within Grand Teton National Park and the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway. This is the time of year when bears emerge from their winter dens and appropriate precautions for traveling in bear country should be taken accordingly. Recently, bears and bear tracks have been sighted in the vicinities of Moran Junction and Flagg Ranch.

When bears come out of their winter dens, they begin to search for any food source that helps restore depleted fat reserves after hibernation. Winter-killed wildlife carcasses provide an immediate source of protein and are vigorously defended by hungry bears. Bears also dig up and eat burrowing rodents and the tubers of spring wildflowers. Female bears, accompanied by cubs, are especially protective of their young. **Do not approach a bear under any circumstances.** This is particularly important for situations involving bears with cubs or bears near a carcass.

When traveling in bear country, precautionary measures should include carrying pepper spray and keeping it easily accessible to use. Take time to become familiar with the proper handling of pepper spray and remember that it is not a substitute for being alert and exercising good safety practices, such as making noise and traveling in a group - not alone - while in the backcountry.

Visitors should report any bear sightings or signs, as soon as possible, to the nearest visitor center or ranger station. This timely information will assist park staff in keeping bears away from unnatural food sources. Access to human food habituates bears. Habituated animals often lose their fear of humans, which threatens the safety of both park visitors and the bears themselves.

For further information on spring conditions and bear activity in Grand Teton National Park, call 307/739-3300.

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